1   **1.** A graphical user interface for specifying an action to be performed on a field of a

2   record when a query with which the action is associated returns the record,

3   the graphical user interface comprising:

4   a window containing a table wherein the field has an entry that is selectable by the

5   user, the entry including

6   a first field that identifies the field to be acted on; and

7   one or more action fields that, when the user has selected the entry, the

8   user may set to specify the action.

1   **2.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   the identified field's values belong to one of a plurality of types; and

3   the action fields in the entry are determined by the type of the identified field's

4   values.

1   **3.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 2 wherein:

2   the plurality of types include types whose values belong to ordered sets that are

3   defined in the system in which the graphical user interface is used, types whose values

4   specify times, and types whose values specify persons.

1   **4.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   the user may set the action fields to specify that the identified field be cleared.

1   **5.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   the user may set the action fields to specify a value and to specify that the value

3   be assigned to the identified field.

1   **6.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   when the field's entry is selected, the user may set the action fields to specify an

3   operation by which a new value for the identified field may be computed from a current

4   value which is the identified field's value when the record is returned.

1   **7.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 6 wherein:

2   the field's value belongs to an ordered set of values; and

3   the user may set the action fields to specify an increment operation wherein the

4   new value is a value that follows the identified field's current value in the ordered set of

5   values.

1   **8.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   the identified field may have a null value when the record is returned; and

3   the user may set the action fields to specify an action that is to be performed when

4   the identified field has the null value and/or an action that is to be performed when the

5   identified field does not have the null value.

1   **9.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   the user may set the action fields to specify a reference field which is another field

3   in the record and a reference field operation by which a new value for the identified field

4   may be computed from a current value of the reference field which is the value that the

5   reference field has when the record is returned.

1   **10.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 9 wherein:

2   the identified field may have a null value when the record is returned; and

3   the user may set the action fields to specify a first reference field and a first

4   reference field operation is to be performed when the identified field has the null value

5   and/or a second reference field and a second reference field operation that is to be

6   performed when the identified field does not have the null value.

1   **11.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 9 wherein:

2   the reference field operation assigns the current value of the reference field to the

3   identified field.

1   **12.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 9 wherein:

2   the identified field and the reference field have time values; and

3   the user may further set the action fields to specify an amount of time by which

4   the reference field's current value is increased or decreased to compute the new value for

5   the identified field.

1   **13.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 12 wherein:

56

2   the user may further set the action fields to specify the amount of time in one of a

3   plurality of ways.

1   **14.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 13 wherein:

2   one of the plurality of ways is days; and

3   when days have been specified, the user may further set the action fields to

4   specify whether the days will be computed as business days or calendar days.

1   **15.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 12 wherein:

2   one of the reference fields is a field whose value is always set to the current time

3   when the query returns the record.

1   **16.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 1 wherein:

2   the identified field has a person value; and

3   the user may set the action fields to specify a role reference field from which a

4   new person value for the identified field may be obtained, the role reference field

5   referring to an ordered set of person values wherein one of the person values is a last-

6   used person value and the role reference field obtaining the next person value following

7   the last-used person value at the time the record is returned as the new person value for

8   the identified field.

1   **17.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 16 wherein:

2   the user may further set the action fields to specify a person reference field that

3   has a person value, the identified field being set from the value of the person reference

4   field when the record is returned.

1   **18.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 17 wherein:

2   another action has been specified which assigns the person reference field a value

3   from a role reference field; and

4   when the record is returned, actions which assign person fields values from roll

5   reference fields are performed prior to other actions.

1   **19.** The graphical user interface set forth in claim 16 wherein:

2   the user may further set the action fields to directly specify a person value, the

3   identified field being set from the directly-specified person value when the record is

4   returned.